

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 01281 301535Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-01 SY-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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R 301440Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4829
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1281

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, BQG, AKB
SUBJECT: BULGARIAN RETURN OF GERMAN TERRORISTS

REF: A) STATE 160655 (NOTAL) B) SOFIA 1232

1. ON JUNE 29, AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED TO FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV US APPRECIATION FOR PROMPT BULGARIAN RETURN OF GERMAN TERRORIST (PER REF A). MLADENOV WAS CLEARLY VERY INTERESTED AND PLEASED THAT THE US HAD TAKEN NOTE IN THIS WAY OF THE BULGARIAN ACTION. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD REPORT THE US EXPRESSION OF SATISFACTION TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE GOVERNMENT.

2. MLADENOV ALSO STATED THAT IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO, AND THEY HAD THEREFORE DONE IT, EVEN THOUGH THERE WAS "SOME RISK," AND THE DECISION "HAD NOT BEEN EASY". IN A SPEARATECONVERSATION THE SAME DAY WITH FRG AMBASSADOR STOECKER, MLADENOV WAS MORE EXPLICIT ON THE RISK INVOLVED; THERE WAS (AND PRESUMABLY IS) CONCERN THAT OTHER TERRORISTS
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PAGE 02 SOFIA 01281 301535Z

MAY UNDERTAKE SOME DIRECT ACTION AGAINST A BULGARIAN MISSION IN GERMANY OR ELSEWHERE IN PUNITIVE RETRIBUTION. MLADENOV DID NOT INDICATE EITHER TO STOCKER OR TO ME WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN DIVIDED VIEWS WITHIN THE BULGARIAN LEADERSHIP, BUT IT WAS A MATTER CLEARLYDECIDED (AND RAPIDLY--SEE REF B) AT HIGHEST LEVELS. MLADENOV ALSO REMARKED TO STOECKER THAT "THE TERRORISTS WERE, AFTER

ALL, FACISTS"--POSSIBLY IMPLYING A DIFFERENT REACTION TO TERRORISTS ASSOCIATED WITH SOME "NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT" SUPPORTED BY BULGARIA AND THE SOVIET CAMP.

3. SENIOR BULGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS, IN CONVERSATIONS WITH SEVERAL WESTERN AMBASSADORS, HAVE MADE A POINT OF CONTRASTING THE PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE BULGARIAN ACTION WITH THE CONDITIONAL AND OBSTRUCTIVE, OR AT LEAST DILATORY, RESPONSE BY THE YUGOSLAVS. THIS CONSIDERATION ALONE, HOWEVER, WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH TO HAVE PROMPTED THE BULGARIAN ACTION.

4. AMONG NEGATIVE CONSIDERATIONS THAT THE BULGARIANS MAY HAVE WEIGHED WAS THE FACT THAT THE INITIAL GERMAN IDENTIFYING SOURCE WAS A WEST BERLIN PRISON OFFICIAL. THIS FACT HAS NOT, HOWEVER, BEEN MENTIONED BY THE BULGARIANS. INASMUCH AS THE OFFICIAL REQUEST TO BULGARIA CAME DIRECTLY FROM THE FRG IN BONN, THIS CONSIDERATION MAY NOT HAVE PLAYED ANY ROLE.
GARTHOFF

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